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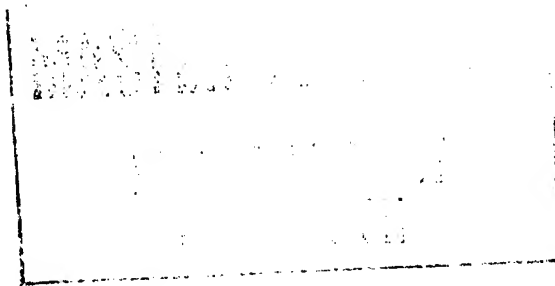
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Israel's Arab Population

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A Research Paper

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*NESA 84-10317
December 1984*

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Israel's Arab Population

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A Research Paper

This paper was prepared by [redacted]
Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis,
with a contribution by [redacted] Office of
Central Reference, and [redacted] NESA. It
was coordinated with the Directorate of
Operations. [redacted]

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Comments and queries are welcome and may be
directed to the Chief, Arab-Israeli Division, NESA,

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Israel's Arab Population

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Summary

*Information available
as of 6 November 1984
was used in this report.*

Over the next five years, Israel's Arab citizens—who comprise approximately 14 percent of Israel's population—will become increasingly disaffected, in part because Israel's heavily encumbered budget will leave only scarce funding to address Israeli Arab grievances and, also, because most Jewish Israelis do not believe it is desirable or necessary to devote greater attention to this issue. The Israeli Arab community, nonetheless, is unlikely, in our judgment, to engage in prolonged antigovernment violence. We expect that Israel will be able to deal with sporadic Arab unrest, in part by resorting to measures that will further tarnish Israel's international image.

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Israeli Arabs have become increasingly dissatisfied with their inferior political, social, and economic position in Israeli society. They are not so well educated as Jewish citizens; the family income of Arabs lags significantly behind Jewish income, and Arabs are excluded, often systematically, from many social welfare benefits and career opportunities.

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The increasing frustration of Israeli Arabs is indicated by the results of the 1984 Knesset election. For the first time in Israel's history, the majority of Israeli Arabs voted for leftist parties that support the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the occupied territories.

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Arabs historically have had little political influence in the Israeli Government, despite the fact that they account for 10 percent of the electorate. Although mainstream Israeli political parties have benefited from Arab electoral support, once in power these parties have done little to improve conditions for the Arab community. At the same time, leftist parties that cater to the Arab vote have been excluded from active participation in the formulation of Israeli Government policy.

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We doubt that Israel's national unity government will devote significantly greater attention to solving problems affecting the Arab community than its predecessors. Israel's troubled economy, the complaints of Israel's Sephardi Jews, and maintaining the country's military infrastructure will be of greater concern for the government.

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The existence of a large Arab population within Israel already possessing most civil rights will spell serious trouble for US-Israeli relations should a future Israeli government annex the West Bank. Because the Arab population of Israel, together with that of the West Bank, will surpass the Israeli Jewish population sometime in the next century, Israeli annexation would be unlikely to involve extending suffrage and other civil rights to West Bank Arabs. Israel would be hard pressed to defend such dual policies in international forums—a dilemma most likely to generate growing international criticism of the United States for maintaining its special relationship with Israel.

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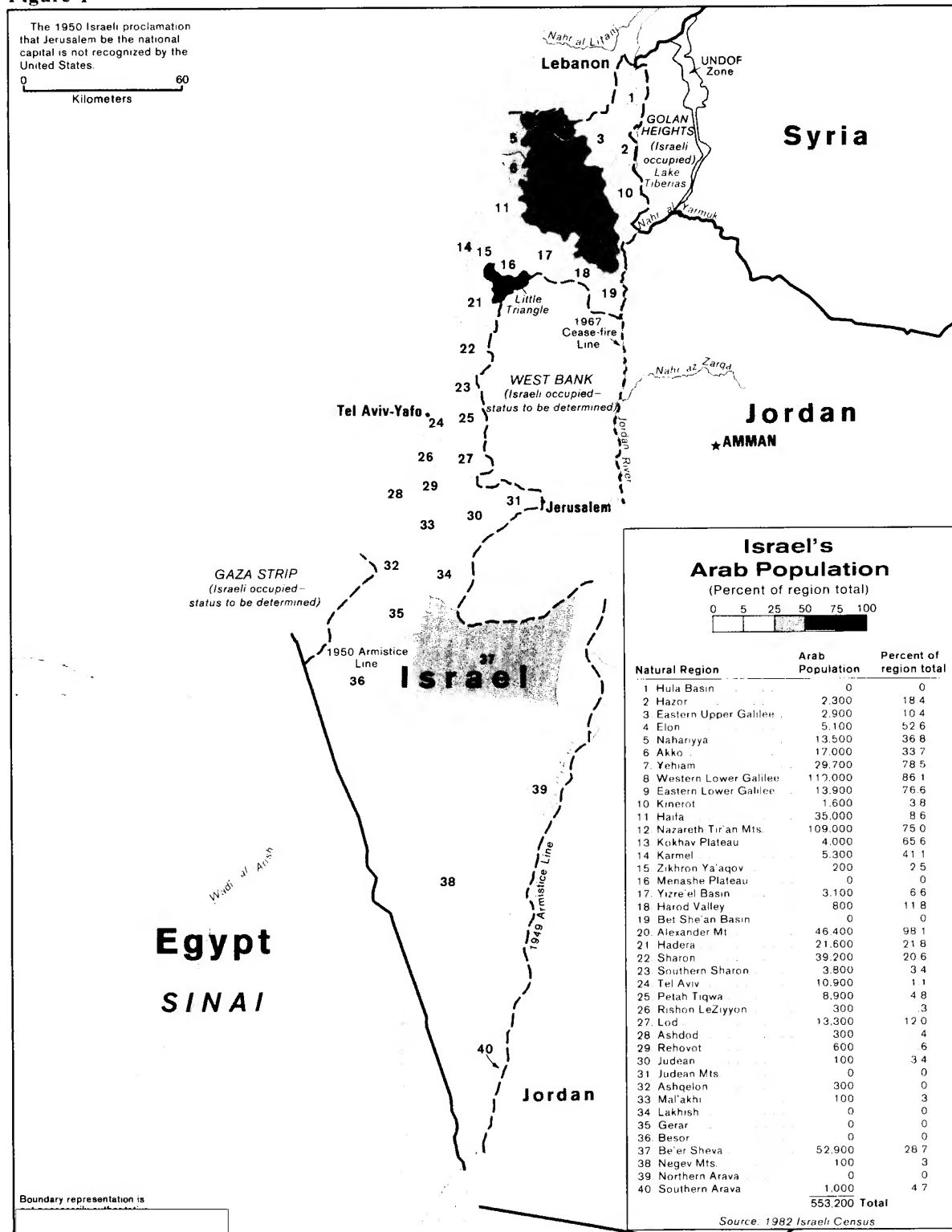
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Figure 1



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Israel's Arab Population

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After the 1948-49 War of Independence, many Israeli Jews feared that the 160,000 Arabs remaining within Israel's borders would create serious security and political problems for the country. With a few exceptions, however, most Israeli Arabs have been politically quiescent and have not identified actively with broader Palestinian nationalist aspirations. Nevertheless, Israel's Arabs have remained outside the political, economic, and social mainstream of Israeli society. The 550,000 Arab citizens of Israel today comprise approximately 14 percent of the country's population.¹

Israel is committed in principle to assuring equal benefits to all its citizens. In practice, however, the primary domestic goal of the Israeli state during its first 36 years has been the creation of a viable homeland for the Jewish people. Successive governments have focused on absorbing Jewish immigrants; addressing the problems of the Arab community has been a secondary concern at best.

Half Full or Half Empty

The Arabs who found themselves inside Israel's boundaries after the War of Independence were not typical of the Arab population living in the area before the conflict. Four-fifths of the region's Arab inhabitants left their homes during the fighting. Most of the Arab elites—political and religious leaders, businessmen, educators, and intellectuals—left the country. An Israeli official at the time described those Arabs remaining as a “headless body.” All academic sources agree that the poorest, least educated Arabs were the ones who stayed in Israel.

After the war, Israeli Arabs were concentrated in two regions of the country. Well over half lived in Galilee;

¹ The Israeli Government cites a figure of 700,000 Israeli Arabs, but this number includes Arabs living in East Jerusalem. This paper is limited to a discussion of Arab citizens of Israel living within its pre-1967 borders and thus does not include Arab residents of East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip.



Figure 2. Israel: Bedouin Camp

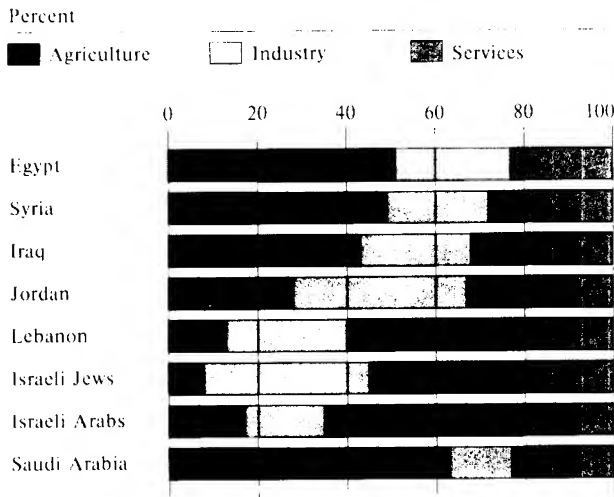
another 20 to 25 percent lived in the “Little Triangle,” a small section of Israel populated almost exclusively by Arabs adjacent to the northwestern border of the West Bank. Approximately 10,000 Bedouins lived in the Negev. Most Israeli Arabs were Sunni Muslims, approximately 15 percent were Christians, with Druze Arabs constituting an even smaller minority (see appendix A).

Until 1966, 85 percent of Israeli Arabs lived under military jurisdiction. They were denied basic civil liberties such as freedom of movement and had to apply for permits to travel from village to village. Military rule was lifted that year, however, because Israeli Arabs had not posed any significant security threat. Arabs today share most rights and obligations of Israeli citizenship. The key exception is that Arabs, except for the Druze, are excluded from military service.

Academics and Israeli-based media commentators differ on the extent to which Arabs have prospered under Israeli rule. Those critical of the Israeli Government point to the significant economic disparities between the country's Jewish and Arab families.

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Figure 3
Middle East: Labor Force Occupational Breakdown, 1977



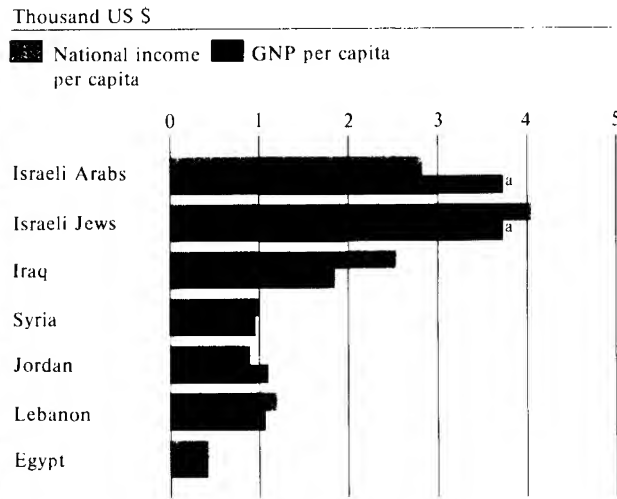
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Defenders of Israeli policy toward Arabs argue that economic and social conditions in the country's Arab communities have improved appreciably since 1948, and that Israeli Arabs have one of the highest standards of living in the Middle East. [redacted]

Data are available to support both arguments. According to official Israeli Government figures, the average household income of Arab families in urban areas is only 70 percent of that of Jewish urban families. Over 30 percent of Arab homes have more than three people per room, compared to 1.3 percent of Jewish families living in similar conditions. In 1982 only 20 Arabs belonged to university faculties in Israel, compared to 6,000 Jews. Arabs comprise approximately 1 percent of government employees but account for 80 percent of laborers and construction workers. [redacted]

Observers defending Israel's policy toward its Arabs point to the success in extending education and health benefits to Arab communities. In 1949, 45 primary

Figure 4
Middle East: National Income and GNP Figures, 1983



^a GNP figures unavailable for Israeli Arabs and Jews separately.
 Note: GNP and National income in US \$.

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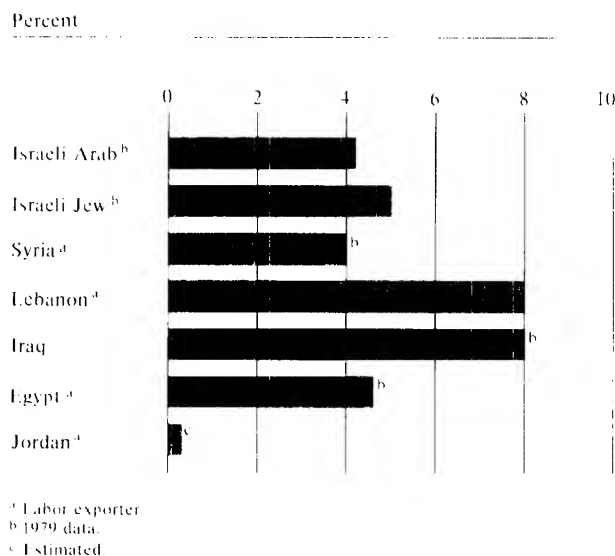
schools served 9,991 Arab students; in 1980 over 200,000 Arab children were receiving primary or secondary education. According to government statistics, by 1980, 57 percent of Israeli Arabs between the ages of 18 and 24 had had at least nine years of schooling, and another 34 percent had had between five and eight years of schooling. These figures compare favorably to those of Arab states in the region. [redacted]

Other indices suggest a general improvement in the standard of living for Israeli Arabs. In 1983 Muslim Arabs suffered 3.9 deaths per 1,000, compared to 6.3 deaths per 1,000 in 1967 and 19.4 deaths per 1,000 during 1941-44. The Arab mortality rate is lower than that for Israeli Jews, in part because of the Arab exclusion from military service. [redacted]

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Figure 5
Middle East: Unemployment, 1980



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In our view, the two interpretations of the Arab experience under Israeli rule are not contradictory. As Israel has prospered, Arabs have benefited from the general improvement in the standard of living. The Arab community, however, suffers from specific problems that have yet to be addressed by any Israeli government. The record of previous governments shows that the great majority of development programs have been directed at solving the problems of the Jewish community.

During the 1950s and 1960s, for example, the government earmarked funds for the development of the Galilee region. Most Arab communities in the area, according to academic studies, were economically underdeveloped, but the government programs were directed almost exclusively at increasing the Jewish population there to prevent an Arab demographic majority. Development towns were created to house new Jewish immigrants; there were no housing programs for Arab residents.

The programs to settle Galilee and build new roads and other infrastructure there often required the expropriation of Arab land. In addition, much of the land that was abandoned by the Arabs who left Israel during the fighting in the late 1940s eventually came under government control, and many other Arabs who remained in Israel could not provide adequate documentation to prove their ownership of contested land. One Israeli Jewish academic has estimated that Arabs lost between 40 and 60 percent of their land from 1948 through 1967, and that 56 percent of all Arab families were affected by land expropriation.

Discrepancies in Israeli Government policies toward Arab and Jewish communities persist. There are significant gaps in the funding allocated to Arab versus Jewish municipalities by the national government. The Jewish development town of Nazerat 'Illit (Upper Nazareth), for example, receives three times more government revenue per capita than does the neighboring city of Nazareth, a predominantly Arab community. Some academics estimate that the funds extended to Jewish localities exceed those to Arab towns and villages by a ratio of 8:1 per capita.

In addition, international Zionist organizations provide financial assistance for new settlements and improved services in Israel. Arab communities are not eligible for such programs—unlike Arab communities in the West Bank, which receive funding via Jordan from Palestinians in the diaspora. A Jewish town, for example, can turn to Zionist organizations for funding to build new facilities if there is no financing from the national government. As a result, most academics and journalists agree that the standard of social services available in Arab towns and villages is well below that of Jewish communities.

Arab Politics

Because most of the Arab community's elites left Israel during the War of Independence, the first military governors responsible for the Arab sector had to deal with the more traditional leaders of Arab

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Figure 6
Israel: Labor Force by Ethnic Group and Education,
1961 and 1982

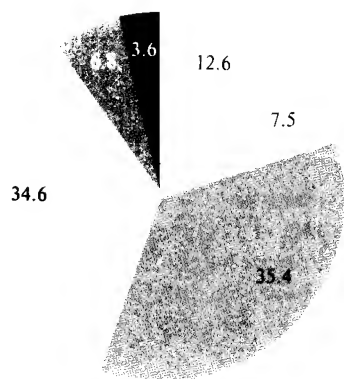
Percent

Years of education

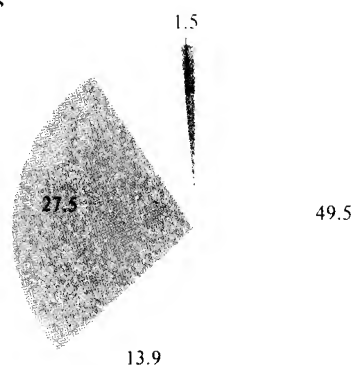
- 0
- 1-4
- 5-8
- 9-12
- 13-15
- 16+

1961

Israeli Jews

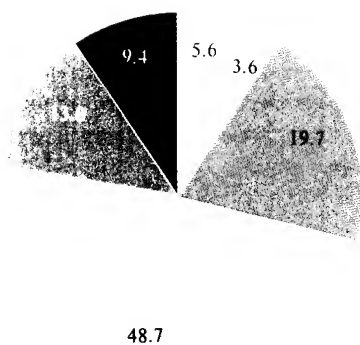


Israeli Arabs

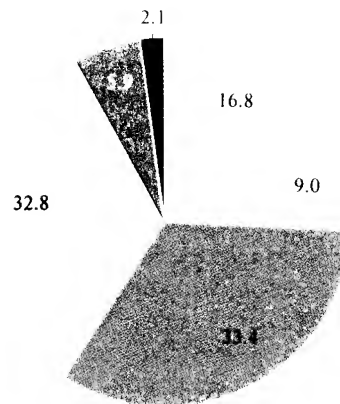


1982

Israeli Jews

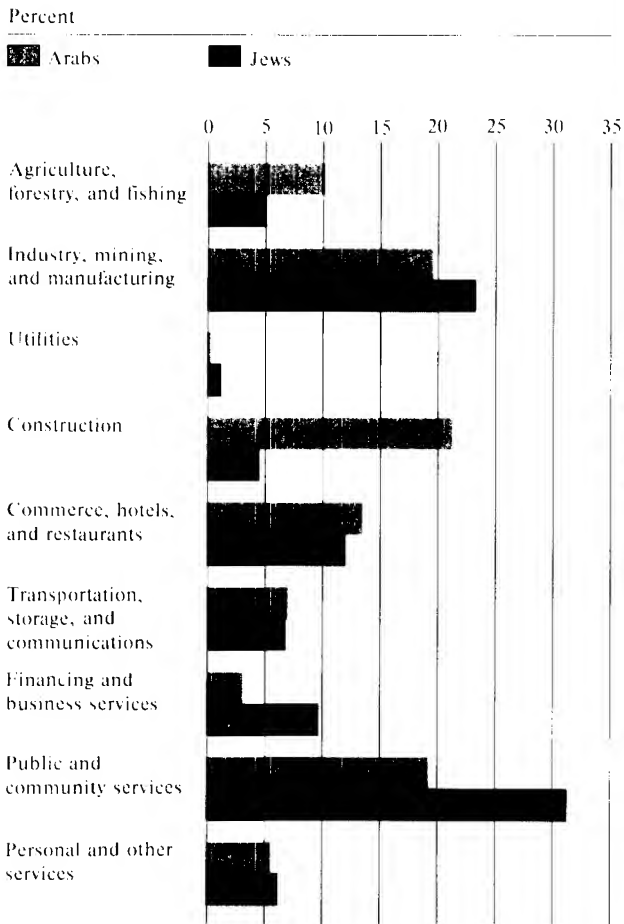


Israeli Arabs



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Figure 7
Israel: Employed Persons by Economic Branch, 1982



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villages. Israeli political parties, particularly after the lifting of military rule, also initiated contacts with Arab village leaders, offering them patronage jobs, financial aid, and social services in return for their community's vote at national elections. []



Figure 8. Israel: Arab voters [] 25X1

The Labor Party was the most successful in attracting Arab support, largely because Labor leaders promised that they would address the problems of Arab communities. Although other Israeli parties paid lip-service to Arab needs, the Labor Party, through its association with the Histadrut labor federation, was better able to deliver on promises of jobs and social services. Today, approximately 10 percent of the Histadrut is Arab, as is one of the 16 members of the federation's executive committee. Arabs are more fully represented in the Histadrut than in any other Israeli institution. Arabs assure the Labor Party of a majority within the Histadrut, according to US Embassy reporting. []

Traditional leaders, because of the importance of clan relationships among Arabs, had significant influence in their towns and villages during the 1950s and 1960s. According to academic studies, they tended to be conservative in their political outlook: they sought to accommodate themselves to the Israeli system and gain personal prestige and financial rewards for their communities by cooperating with it. []

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In recent years, however, economic and social change in the Arab community has eroded support for traditional leaders. In a 1980 survey of Arab attitudes, only 14 percent of the respondents considered Arab leaders associated with the Labor Party as representing the interests of Israeli Arabs. Arabs dissatisfied with the performance of their traditional leaders argue that these leaders have been co-opted by Israeli society and have betrayed Arab interests by placing personal gain before community concerns [REDACTED]

As Arabs became frustrated with their traditional leaders and Israeli policies, they began casting their votes in local and national elections for Rakah, the Israeli Communist Party. The Rakah leadership, which is almost wholly Jewish, has sought to portray the party as the preeminent representative of Israeli Arab views. Rakah supports the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and a greater economic and political role for Arabs living in Israel. [REDACTED]

Rakah has become very active in Arab local politics. Approximately half of the Arab communities in Israel have locally elected governments, and almost half of the local councils are headed by Rakah supporters. The party is particularly popular in the Galilee region. Nazareth, Israel's largest Arab town, has had a Rakah mayor since 1975. [REDACTED]

Arab electoral support for Rakah grew throughout the 1970s, and in the 1977 Knesset election the party garnered just under half of the Arab vote. Rakah cultivated the Arab electorate by lobbying hard against government policies detrimental to Israeli Arabs. The party was the principal organizer of the first Arab Land Day demonstration on 30 March 1976. Arabs throughout Israel, but particularly in the north, protested Jewish expropriation of Arab land in the Galilee; some of the demonstrations turned violent, and six Arabs were killed and another 300 arrested. [REDACTED]

Despite Rakah's political strength in the Arab community, the party does not attract the support of all Arabs opposed to the politics of their traditional leaders. More radical Arabs, particularly the younger and university educated, object to the party's "establishment politics," the predominance of Jews within the party hierarchy, and its recognition of the state of

Israel. Arabs who reject cooperation with the Israeli Government divide their support between two organizations, the Sons of the Villages and the Progressive National Movement. [REDACTED]

The Sons of the Villages began to emerge as a political force in Arab communities in the early 1970s. It had its roots in an earlier radical organization, the Land Movement, which was outlawed in 1964 because of its Palestinian nationalist views. As its name indicates, the movement draws much of its support from rural Arabs. The group supports self-determination for Israeli Arabs and the eventual creation of a secular state in Palestine. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Sons of the Villages have avoided government censure by, for the most part, not engaging in violence. The movement's inept leadership has reduced its effectiveness and thus contributed to its escaping government censure. [REDACTED]

The Progressive National Movement (PNM) also emerged in the 1970s and espouses views similar to those of the Sons of the Villages. The Progressive National Movement operates almost exclusively among Arab students at Israeli universities. It criticizes the Sons of the Villages for being "all talk but no action." The Prime Minister's Arab affairs adviser has characterized the PNM as more radical than the Sons of the Villages. In the late 1970s, according to the Arab affairs adviser, seven PNM members, on their own initiative, made their way to Iraq, where they received terrorist training. Upon their return to Israel, they carried out two acts of violence before being caught. Other members have been expelled from Israeli universities and subjected to house arrest for spreading subversive propaganda. [REDACTED]

Despite the considerable attention that the PNM and the Sons of the Villages receive from the Israeli press, the US Embassy estimated in 1983 that the membership of both organizations was quite small. Surveys of Israeli Arab attitudes do not normally include these two groups in their polling questions. [REDACTED]

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Figure 9. Israel: Arab protest

One imprecise way of measuring the degree of community support for the Sons of the Villages and the Progressive National Movement is by gauging Arab views concerning the PLO and the advisability of illegal protest against Israeli policies. According to a 1980 survey of Arab attitudes, 48 percent believed that Palestinian personalities or organizations abroad (read PLO leaders and factions) represented the interests of Israeli Arabs. The same survey found that 18.4 percent of Israeli Arabs favored the use of force to effect changes in government policies. Another 17.6 percent supported illegal demonstrations. These results suggest that a significant minority of Israeli Arabs support the PNM and the Sons of the Villages.

Although almost half of Israeli Arabs apparently support the PLO, there is little evidence to suggest that the PLO has had success in organizing secretly within Israel. Israel's efficient internal security service has only rarely discovered attempts to form PLO cells. The PLO can maintain informal contacts with Israeli Arabs, however, by meeting with them when they travel abroad. The US Embassy believes that the Progressive National Movement and the Sons of the Villages may receive funds from the PLO.

Islamic fundamentalism is another political force among Israeli Arabs, but its support is difficult to quantify. The US Embassy reports that as of 1983 the fundamentalist movement among Israeli Arabs was

still a minor phenomenon. Government policies probably will continue to make it difficult for Islamic fundamentalism to become an organizing force in Israeli Arab politics.

Muslim religious functionaries and institutions, including mosques, depend on the Israeli Government for much of their income; civil servants recommend who will receive grants from Waqf funds, which are managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The National Religious Party usually has controlled the religious portfolio in most coalition governments, and, because of its power to dispense benefits, this party has received 3 to 4 percent of the Arab vote in the last two national elections. Most Arab leaders complain that the Ministry of Religious Affairs is not responsive to Muslim needs; there is, for example, no higher school in Israel for training Muslim clerics.

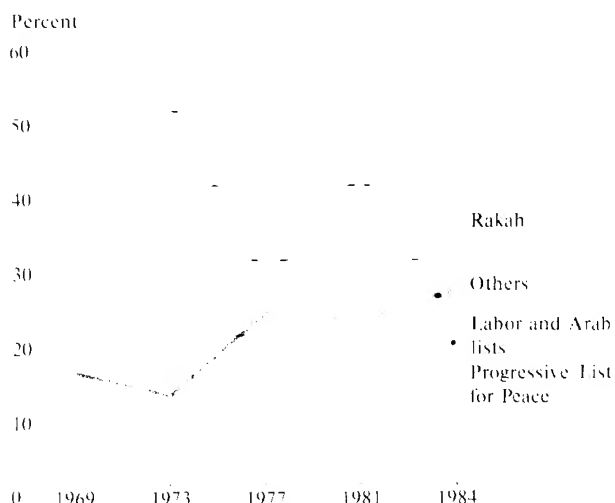
Despite the obstacles faced by Muslim leaders, Islamic fundamentalist groups are active among Arabs, particularly in the religiously conservative villages in the Little Triangle. The Islamic fundamentalists generally object to all contacts with Israeli Jews, which tends further to reduce their influence, given the government's control of funds for Arab communities.

Recent Political Trends

Rakah's electoral support from Israeli Arabs has declined in the last two national elections from its high of almost 50 percent in 1977. In 1981 Rakah's electoral list, running as the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, received 37 percent of the Arab vote, and this year its proportion of the vote declined to 34 percent.

Several factors account for the decline in Rakah's fortunes. In the 1981 election many Arabs who traditionally had cast a protest vote for Rakah voted for the Labor Party in hope of preventing a second Likud victory. In addition, the more radical Arab

Figure 10
Israel: Arab Voting Trends in National Elections, 1969-84



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groups called for a boycott of the election, and 32 percent of the eligible Arab voters abstained, compared to 25 percent in the 1977 election.

In the 1984 election, however, the percentage of Arabs voting rose to 77 percent, but Rakah did not attract significant support among the new voters. Most apparently voted for the Progressive List for Peace, a new Arab-Jewish party that appeals to disaffected Arabs looking for a non-Communist alternative to Rakah. The PLP won almost 18 percent of the Arab vote, enough for two Knesset seats.

Rakah and the PLP together have six seats in the new Knesset, but their political influence is not commensurate with their numbers. Unlike other smaller parties, Rakah and the PLP were not courted as potential coalition partners. The two parties' support for a Palestinian state in the occupied territories has effectively eliminated them from consideration.

Some Arab moderates publicly argue that their community wastes its vote by supporting Rakah and the

PLP. They believe that their interests would best be served by forming an independent Arab party that avoided Palestinian nationalist issues. Such a party would instead concentrate on Arab social and economic needs and seek to ally itself with mainstream Israeli parties.

An independent Arab party theoretically could control up to 12 seats in the Knesset; even if only 30 percent of the Arab electorate voted for an independent party, it would receive four or five Knesset seats and become a potentially important coalition partner.

Nevertheless, efforts to form an independent Arab list have faltered. The Labor Alignment has opposed such a move, and Rakah has fought it as well. To this end, both parties have dispensed patronage benefits to discourage Arab politicians from joining an independent party. Arab local leaders also have proved unwilling to organize a party divorced from Palestinian nationalist causes.

Previous Israeli governments have prevented the creation of Arab national movements by using broad discretionary security powers dating from the British mandate period. In 1980, for example, Prime Minister Begin prevented the establishment of a Congress of Arab Masses, envisaged as a representative body for all Arabs. Begin accused the nascent organization of supporting separatism and acting as a front for the PLO.

Prospects

Unless local Arab leaders establish an independent party that can use its position as a coalition partner to bargain for specific reforms in government policies, we do not expect any significant redress of Arab social, economic, and political grievances. There is little support within the Israeli Jewish population for addressing Arab concerns. According to a poll taken earlier this year, 54 percent of Israel's Jewish population would prefer that the country have no Arab residents. Other polls indicate that most Jews believe

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they should be given preference over Arabs in the distribution of jobs and welfare benefits. Over two-thirds believe the government already is doing enough or too much for its Arab citizens. []

We do not believe that Israel's national unity government will be able to improve Arab conditions significantly. The government's need to deal first with Israel's troubled economy almost certainly will undercut its ability to devote increased resources to the Arab community. Addressing the economic and social grievances of Israel's Sephardi Jews and maintaining the country's large military infrastructure will continue to be a higher priority. []

In addition, the structure of Israeli society favors Jews over Arabs; this will be difficult, if not politically impossible, for any Israeli government to change. Institutional factors, such as the prohibition against Arabs working in defense-related industries—which account for a growing percentage of Israeli jobs—will limit Arab access to improved salaries and benefits. []

Similarly, many government social welfare programs systematically exclude Arabs. According to a recent law, for example, large families receive subsidies on the condition that males in the family have served in the Army, a provision that automatically excludes Arabs, except the Druze. College students receive funds to defray tuition based on their Sephardi background, residence in development towns, or status as a military veteran—criteria that exclude those of Arab origin. Despite a Defense Ministry announcement earlier this year that it would begin to accept Arab recruits on an experimental basis, we doubt that any Israeli government could countenance, for security reasons, a large influx of Arabs into the military. Most Arabs, because of their political views, are unlikely to volunteer for military service, thus remaining unable to qualify for many social welfare programs. []

Despite the poor prospects for change in the government's approach to the Arab community, we do not believe that growing Arab discontent will pose near-term security problems for Israel. Polling data indicate that two-thirds of Israeli Arabs still believe their situation can be improved by "acceptable democratic

means." Over half of Israeli Arabs, according to a 1980 survey, were not prepared to consider moving to a Palestinian state if one were established alongside Israel. [] 25X1

To date, there has been little politically motivated Arab violence. Since the 1960s there have been two periods of increased unrest in the community. After the Israeli occupation of the West Bank in 1967 and the emergence of the PLO, Israeli Arabs began to sympathize more with Palestinian nationalist aspirations. Between 1967 and 1973, 320 Israeli Arabs were arrested for joining terrorist organizations; some carried out attacks before their capture. The level of violence dropped off in the mid-1970s, however, and in 1978, for example, no Israeli Arab was arrested for pro-PLO activity, according to the US Embassy. [] 25X1

The second spurt of political violence occurred between 1979 and 1982. During that period, the Israeli security forces announced the breakup of several terrorist cells. Most of these cells were associated with the PLO, but some were connected to indigenous Israeli Arab groups, such as the Muslim Brotherhood. The increase in politically motivated violence led some observers to predict a long-term escalation of Arab unrest. The last two years, however, have been relatively quiet. [] 25X1

The 1976 Land Day demonstrations are the major exception to this pattern, but many observers attribute the violence then to unsophisticated and excessive Israeli police tactics. Most Land Day observances since 1976 have been relatively peaceful. During Land Day demonstrations earlier this year, few arrests were made, and what little violence occurred was largely limited to fistfights between Rakah supporters and members of more radical Arab groups. The slogan this year reflects the Arabs' low-key approach to the event: "Against land expropriation, for Jewish-Arab friendship." The US Embassy reports that the Israeli police were conspicuous by their absence. [] 25X1

The lack of effective Arab leadership in Israel will continue to militate against the emergence of sustained, violent protest in the Arab community. Israeli authorities are confident that they have the more

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radical groups, such as the Progressive National Movement and the Sons of the Villages, under control. Tel Aviv presumably welcomes diversity in Arab political organizations because this works against Arab unity. The government would move quickly to disband radical groups, however, should they become more effective in mobilizing the Arab population. []

Rakah's appeal and effectiveness are also limited. The party's senior leadership is predominantly Jewish, and Communism as an ideology has only limited appeal to Israeli Arabs. The Israeli Government apparently understands Rakah's limitations and thus sees little reason to ban Rakah even though the party supports the creation of a West Bank Palestinian state. []

Over the long term, the Israeli Government may find it more difficult to control the Arab population. Demographic factors will add to the size of the Arab problem. The Israeli Arab population is very young; the mean age of Arabs in Israel is 21, compared to 30 for Jews. Some 75 percent of Israeli Arabs are under the age of 35, and the Arab annual rate of natural increase is 38 per 1,000 compared to 18 per 1,000 among Jews. []

University-educated Arabs are increasingly frustrated, both by their impotent political position and by their inability to obtain good jobs. Polls consistently indicate that younger, better educated Arabs are less sanguine about the prospects for peaceful change. Although Arab young people have not translated their discontent into political violence, their disaffection has apparently resulted in increased delinquency. According to Israeli Government figures, 48 percent of juvenile crimes in Israel are committed by Arabs; 10 years ago their share was negligible. It is still too early to tell, however, whether the more radical views of Arab youth endure as they reach adulthood. []

We believe that the significant differences in the views of Israeli Arabs and Jews will increasingly alienate the Arab community from the Israeli Government and society generally. Even though most Israeli Arabs believe change is possible within the system, most Israeli Jews believe change is neither necessary nor desirable. Given our judgment that little change is forthcoming and that demographic

trends favor the Arabs, the Israeli Government probably will face increasing social unrest from the Arab community over the long term. []

The recent election of the ultrarightist Meir Kahane to the Knesset will also fuel Jewish-Arab tensions. Kahane advocates the expulsion of Arabs from Israel, and his inflammatory statements and actions have already resulted in violent protests in Arab communities. A dramatic event, such as an attack on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, could serve as a catalyst for Israeli Arab protest and prompt spontaneous violence even in the absence of popular leadership. []

Security problems probably will remain limited to areas such as the Little Triangle and the Galilee, where Arabs now are a majority of the population. To contain Arab protests and violence, however, Israel probably will have to resort occasionally to harsh security measures that will further tarnish Israel's international image. []

Implications for the United States

Israel's success so far in handling its indigenous Arab population has implications for the government's policies in the occupied territories—potentially the most serious point of contention in US-Israeli relations. We expect that the lessons learned in the Galilee and Little Triangle will be applied to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Rural and traditional leaders in the occupied territories have been courted and supported at the expense of more radical, educated urban elites. In addition, many Israelis, particularly members of Likud, are not impressed by predictions that Israel will have significant political and security problems governing the over 1 million Arabs in the occupied territories, given the relative ease with which Israel has handled its own Arab citizenry. []

The existence of a sizable Arab population within Israel that already has most civil rights will create problems for any Israeli government should it decide to annex most or all of the West Bank. The Arab

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population of Israel, together with that of the West Bank, will outnumber the Israeli Jewish population sometime in the next century. For this reason, Israeli annexation of the West Bank, in our view, would not involve the extension of many civil rights, such as suffrage, to the Arab residents of the territory. Israel would be hard pressed to defend such dual policies toward its Arab residents. Under such circumstances, the United States will come under increasing criticism for maintaining close relations with Israel. [REDACTED]

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Annexation of the West Bank would, in particular, further erode Israel's credibility with key West European and Latin American governments. This in turn would complicate future US efforts to rally support for Israel in the United Nations and at other international gatherings. Israeli annexation of the West Bank could also lead to West European sanctions—similar to or worse than those imposed after Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982—that might worsen Israel's domestic economic difficulties. [REDACTED]

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Appendix A

The Druze—A Special Case

The Israeli Druze have long enjoyed the most amicable relations of any minority group in the Jewish state. Since before the formation of Israel, the Druze have been sympathetic toward the aspirations of the Jewish settlers. Unlike Muslim Arabs, the Druze generally have attempted to assimilate into Israeli society. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, however, generated strains between Druze leaders and the government, and the younger generation of Druze may not be so well disposed as their elders toward the Jews. []

The Druze of the Middle East

The esoteric characteristics of Druze culture and religion account, in large part, for their ability to reconcile themselves to Jewish rule and even prosper under it. The Druze religion—which originated as an offshoot of Shia Islam in 11th-century Egypt—maintains a mystical theology that is understood completely by only a small percentage of its adherents. It differs significantly from the Sunni and Shia sects; most of the obligations of Muslims, for example, are not binding on the Druze. []

Although the Druze religion was founded in Egypt, it never took root there. Instead a Druze community developed in the Mount Lebanon area, founded by a proselytizer for the new sect, Muhammad bin Ismail al-Darazi, whose name eventually was attached to the religion. As a minority sect with a penchant for secrecy, the Druze had their share of problems with the dominant Muslim Arab population of the region. To protect themselves in the often hostile environment, the Druze became both expert and feared fighters and astute and crafty diplomats. []

The tradition of dissembling to protect the group's interests was incorporated at a very early stage as the principle of "taqiya." Taqiya permits the individual Druze to pretend to follow another religion without actually abandoning his sect; the Druze also applied the principle of "pretending to be what you are not" to their political and economic dealings. Throughout

history, the Druze have sought, as long as the viability of their community was not at stake, to conform to the outward customs and practices of the majority community. According to a Druze proverb, "a man's shirt does not change the color of his skin." []

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In contrast to the Druze's often strained relations with other Muslim sects, relations between the Druze and Jewish communities have been amicable. According to one of the few in-depth studies of the religion, the Druze believe that the Jewish religion is to be condemned less than Islam or Christianity. As minority communities in a majority Muslim region, the Jews and Druze traditionally also shared practical reasons for maintaining friendly ties. []

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The Druze and the Israeli State

By the time large-scale Jewish migration to Palestine began in the early 1900s, the Druze population in the Middle East was concentrated in three regions—the Mount Lebanon area, Syria, and the Galilee. During the British mandate over Palestine, many Druze living in Galilee formed personal and economic links with members of the growing Jewish community. Arab nationalists opposed to the Jewish presence in Palestine attempted to recruit Druze to their cause in the 1930s, but their efforts met with little success. Indeed, some Druze began assisting Jews resisting British rule. In 1947 Druze sympathizers hid a wanted Jewish resistance fighter—who later became mayor of Haifa—from British security forces. []

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During the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, Druze living in Syria and the Mount Lebanon area formed a battalion to fight against the Israelis. When this battalion arrived in Galilee, it encountered a Druze population that had no desire to join the fight against the Israelis and urged its Druze brethren to abandon the Arab cause. The lack of enthusiasm among the Galilee

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Druze, along with some early Israeli military successes, convinced the Lebanese and Syrian Druze to dissolve the battalion. Many of the Druze returned to their homes, but some chose to fight alongside the Israelis. These Druze were soon joined by their coreligionists from Galilee, whose leaders had decided that the community's best interests lay in allying with the apparent winning side. By July 1948 a Druze unit had been officially integrated into the Israel Defense Forces. []

Largely because of their record of loyalty, the nascent Israeli Government dealt more favorably with the Druze than it did with the other Arab minorities. At the same time, Druze leaders, unlike Muslim and Christian Arab leaders, sought to play a full role in Israeli society. In the early 1950s the Druze asked the Israeli Government to make Druze males eligible for the draft, and since 1956 Druze, unlike other Arabs, have been subject to conscription. In 1957 the Israeli Government recognized the Druze as an autonomous community distinct from the other Arab communities and allowed the Druze to establish their own judiciary and courts. On their identity cards, Druze are classified as "Druze," not Arab. []

The Druze, however, still did not have the full benefits of Israeli citizenship. Druze military veterans during the 1970s began to demand "equal rights for equal obligations." In 1977 the Likud government made several changes to remedy the imbalance. Jurisdiction over Druze villages was taken out of the Arab departments of the various ministries and incorporated into the main branches. All ranks of the Israeli civil service were opened to the Druze, and Druze soldiers were allowed to serve in almost every branch of the Israeli military, rather than only in units reserved for non-Jewish soldiers. It is now not uncommon for Druze officers to command Jewish units. The government also began to redress economic imbalances. Unlike the situation that existed until the 1970s, all Druze villages today are connected to the national electric grid. []

Israeli Druze Today

There are about 45,000 Israeli Druze, most of whom live in 18 villages in the Galilee region. The Druze comprise roughly 1 percent of the state's population

and about 8 percent of Israel's non-Jewish population. The Druze birth rate of 37.5 per 1,000 parallels that of the Sunni Muslim population and is over twice that of the Jewish community. []

The majority of Druze workers are employed either in agriculture or in defense-related services. Arable land is scarce in most villages, and, for many young Druze, the military or border police offer attractive career choices. For its part, the Israeli Government is eager to recruit Druze policemen and career soldiers. Druze fighters have a reputation for courage on the battlefield; some academic observers attribute this trait to the Druze belief in transmigration of the soul. Perhaps more important, Druze, as loyal Arabic speakers, have proved useful to the Israeli Government in securing and administering the West Bank and southern Lebanon. []

According to Druze spokesmen quoted in the Israeli press, as many as 80 percent of the males in some Druze villages are employed in defense-related jobs. Since the invasion of southern Lebanon in June 1982, over 30 Druze soldiers have been killed in action, a figure that represents some 5 percent of Israeli fatalities there. Almost one-fifth of the 4,500-man Israeli Border Police is Druze. The Border Police shares responsibility with the Israel Defense Forces for security in the West Bank, and, in troublesome cities such as Nablus, Druze members of the Border Police outnumber Jews. The military government for the occupied territories has appointed Druze officers to replace three ousted mayors in the West Bank. []

The Golan Druze

In addition to Druze citizens of Israel, another 12,000 Druze live in the Golan Heights. Unlike other Syrian inhabitants of the region, Druze residents did not leave after the Israelis captured the Golan during the 1967 war. Until 1981 relations between the Golan Druze and the Israeli Government generally were good. Economic conditions for the Druze residents of the area steadily improved, and the military government allowed the Druze to take over some of the agricultural land vacated by departing Syrians. []

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In December 1981, however, the Likud government won passage of a Knesset bill extending Israeli jurisdiction and administration to the Golan Heights, precipitating a six-month confrontation between the Druze and the government over the issue of Israeli identity cards. According to US Embassy reporting, most Golani Druze opposed the new requirements to have identity cards. The Druze initiated a six-month commercial strike to protest the imposition of Israeli law, and the government responded by imposing a blockade of the area. []

Israeli Druze soon petitioned the government on behalf of their coreligionists in the Golan. Prime Minister Begin promised Israeli Druze leaders that the government would attempt to lower tensions, and Golani Druze were assured that acceptance of an Israeli identity card did not imply acceptance of Israeli citizenship. By the end of 1982 the Israeli press reported that 90 percent of Golani Druze had acquired identity cards; only 200 Druze have also agreed to accept Israeli citizenship. []

During the confrontation between the Israeli Government and the Golani Druze, the government and the Israeli Druze community sought to minimize strains in their relationship. Nevertheless, some of the government's actions indicate that it was uncertain whether the loyalty of Israeli Druze might be affected; for example, regular Army units were sent to police the Golan Druze villages during the crisis because of the preponderance of Israeli Druze in the Border Police. []

Israeli Druze and Lebanon

The lengthy Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and Israeli desires to maintain good relations with both the Lebanese Druze and Christian communities also have created tensions between the government and the Israeli Druze. Most Israeli Druze are sympathetic to the demands of their coreligionists in the Shuf and are uneasy about Israel's close ties to the Christian Phalange Party and Lebanese Forces militia. []

When serious factional fighting erupted in Lebanon in September 1983, many Israeli Druze leaders expressed public support for the Lebanese Druze. The Israeli press carried accounts of Druze vandalism against Christian Arab churches in Galilee. Israeli newspapers reported that thousands of Druze attended rallies in Galilee to celebrate the victories of their Lebanese brethren. Several Israeli Druze soldiers recently were accused of stealing ammunition and giving it to Lebanese Druze militia members. []

The Israeli Government has taken pains on several occasions to reassure Israeli Druze leaders of its intentions toward Lebanese Druze. The national unity government probably will try to temper its support for the Lebanese Christians in part because of the importance of Druze participation in the Israeli military and police forces. []

Changes in Jewish-Druze Relations

Despite the long tradition of harmonious Jewish-Druze relations, young Israeli Druze are beginning to sympathize more with the complaints of Israeli Arabs. Electoral results provide evidence of this trend. In the 1973 elections, only 7 percent of the Druze vote went to Rakah. Since the early 1970s, young Druze have been voting in greater numbers for Rakah. Druze under 30 account for about 70 percent of the Druze population. []

This dissatisfaction on the part of young Druze apparently is also affecting their willingness to serve in the military. The US Embassy reports that there is a growing trend among young Druze to register their nationality as Arab to avoid military conscription. The number of Druze who have claimed religious deferments has also risen from 19 for all of 1982 to 71 as of November 1983—a trend probably influenced by Druze reaction to the Israeli invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon. []

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Appendix B

Prominent Arab Personalities



Zaidan Atashi . . . 44 . . . member of Shinui Party . . . member of Knesset since 1977 . . . reform minded on most political issues . . . pro-Zionist . . . Druze . . . native of 'Isfiya, a village near Haifa . . . apparently has strong power base among Arabs in the Galilee region . . . a reporter and senior editor of Israeli television Arab-language programs during the late 1960s . . . head of the information section at the Israeli Consulate General in New York (1972-76) . . . affiliated with the Labor Party during much of that period.

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Abd al-Wahab Darousha . . . 41 . . . member of the Labor Party . . . serving first term in the Knesset . . . local school inspector . . . active in educational matters . . . native of a small Arab village . . . founded a local school and operated it for nine years.

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Muhammad Mi'ari . . . 45 . . . leader of the Progressive List for Peace . . . serving first term in the Knesset . . . native of Sakhnin, a small Arab village near 'Akko . . . a lawyer by profession . . . has been active in the past in the Land Movement, banned in 1964.

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Amal Nasr al-Din . . . 56 . . . Druze . . . Herut Party member since 1970 . . . member of the Knesset since 1977 . . . has strongly encouraged industrial and commercial firms to locate near Druze villages . . . unconfirmed Israeli press accounts indicate he may be unpopular within his own community . . . native of Daliyat el Karmil . . . served in the Israel Defense Forces and saw action in the 1956 and 1967 Arab-Israeli wars.

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Amin Tarif . . . 86 . . . spiritual leader of Israel's Druze community since the early 1950s . . . loyal to Israel, but openly critical of government policies seen as threatening Druze interests . . . disapproved of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon . . . objected to support for the Lebanese Christian Phalange battling his coreligionists.

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Tawfiq Toubi . . . 62 . . . longtime Communist activist and current deputy secretary general of Rakah . . . has served in every Knesset . . . frequent critic of the government's domestic and foreign policies . . . supports the creation of Palestinian state in the West Bank . . . in 1980 met with PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat in Bulgaria—first public meeting between an Israeli politician and Arafat . . . is pro-Soviet on global issues . . . has visited the USSR and most of the East European states . . . awarded the "Order of the Friendship of Peoples" medal by the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1982 . . . a native of Haifa and a journalist by training.

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Muhammad Wattad . . . 47 . . . longtime Mapam Party activist, prominent journalist, and television commentator . . . has served since 1981 in Knesset . . . member of Mapam's Executive Council . . . throughout his career has worked within established channels to improve the political and social lot of Israel's Arabs . . . native of the village of Jatt near Nablus.

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Tawfiq Zayyad . . . about 60 years old . . . devout Marxist and leading member of Rakah since the early 1960s . . . member of Knesset since 1974 and mayor of Nazareth . . . Palestinian nationalist, pro-Soviet, and a critic of the government's West Bank policies . . . advocates Israel's right to exist within its 1967 boundaries but supports the creation of an independent Palestinian state . . . considers the PLO the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians . . . survived three assassination attempts.


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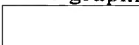
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Erratum

Notice to recipients of Research Paper: *Israel's Arab Population*, NESA 84-10317, Confidential Noform, December 1984. 

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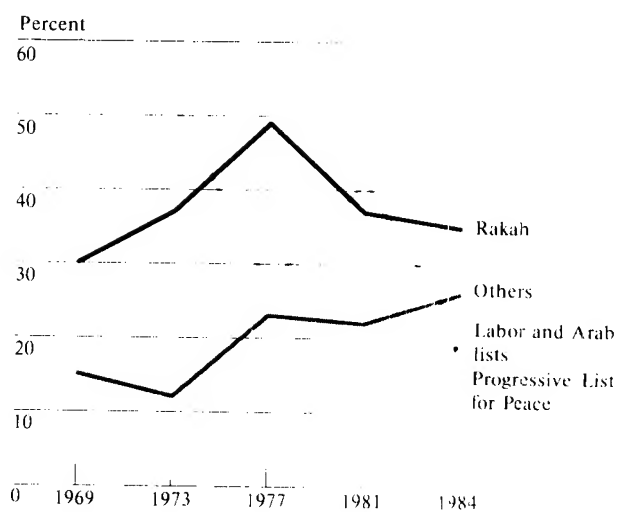
The graphic on page 8 is incorrect. Please replace it with the new chart attached. 

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Figure 10
Israel: Arab Voting Trends in National
Elections, 1969-84



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